

policies of both countries. This exchange is funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

The U.S. delegation should consist of experienced and accomplished Hill staff who can contribute to the success of the exchange on both sides of the Atlantic. The Bundestag reciprocates by sending senior staff professionals to the United States.

Applicants should have a demonstrable interest in events in Europe. Applicants need not be working in the field of foreign affairs, although such a background can be helpful. The composite U.S. delegation should exhibit a range of expertise in issues of mutual concern to the United States and Germany such as, but not limited to, trade, security, the environment, economic development, health care, and other social policy issues. This year's delegation should be familiar with transatlantic relations within the context of recent world events.

In addition, U.S. participants are expected to help plan and implement the program for the Bundestag/Bundesrat staff members when they visit the United States. Participants are expected to assist in planning topical meetings in Washington, and are encouraged to host one or two staffers in their Member's district in July, or to arrange for such a visit to another Member's district.

Participants are selected by a committee composed of personnel from the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the Department of State and past participants of the exchange.

Members of the House and Senate who would like a member of their staff to apply for participation in this year's program should direct them to submit a resume and cover letter in which they state their qualifications, the contributions they can make to a successful program and some assurances of their ability to participate during the time stated.

Applications may be sent to the Office of Interparliamentary Affairs, HB-28, the Capitol, by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, February 21, 2007.

RECOGNIZING AUSTIN ABARR FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Austin Abarr, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 45, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Austin has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Austin has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Austin Abarr for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout. I am hon-

ored to represent Austin in the United States House of Representatives.

IMPLEMENTING THE 9/11 COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF

HON. ANTHONY D. WEINER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, January 9, 2007

Mr. WEINER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to call upon my colleagues to address the very real threat to the security of rail passengers in America. I am a supporter of the 9/11 Commission Bill and commend the Speaker and Chairman THOMPSON for their leadership in at long last implementing the basic reforms directed by the 9/11 Commission.

But the 9/11 Commission's recommendations were but a first step. Since the Commission completed its work, the evolution of terrorism has continued in countries around our planet, and we cannot turn a blind eye to the vulnerabilities that we face in this Nation—particularly those vulnerabilities that are being routinely targeted by terrorists in other parts of the world. Most notably, as demonstrated by the bombings in Madrid in 2004, London in 2005, and Mumbai in 2006—the passenger rail and transit system in this country is a high-risk target and we must address this critical security need immediately.

We rightfully have devoted extensive efforts towards securing aviation, but now it is time to devote significant resources towards one of this country's most vital economic assets.

Each weekday, there are 11.3 million passengers using some form of rail and mass transit. That's more than 5 times as many people taking air passenger trips. At New York's Penn Station alone—there are over half a million people passing through; that is more passengers than at our two busiest air hubs—Chicago and Atlanta—combined. And yet, on average, we have spent \$9 per air passenger compared to 1 penny per rail and mass transit passenger.

The Secretary of Homeland Security often states that it is the management of risk and not the elimination of risk that is the core principle for DHS—and the management of risk requires the prioritization of risk based on three key components: threat, vulnerability, and consequence.

Passenger rail facilities have a high passenger density, which creates the potential for a spectacular attack that is intended to instill fear—we know this is what our enemies look for when planning attacks. We know that they have already mounted vicious attacks in Madrid, London, and Mumbai over the last 3 years, and even before 9/11—in Paris and Tokyo. This threat is real, it is serious, and it is not going away.

We also know that if anything were to happen to disrupt our passenger rail system, the economic consequences and impacts on our way of life would be devastating.

Finally, we know that most of our major passenger rail facilities are old, in some cases falling apart, lack modern security enhancements built into the station design, and would

be unable to recover quickly from even a minor attack. They have not been retrofitted, reinforced, or rebuilt in ways consistent with today's threat environment.

Thus, our passenger rail system is clearly at a high risk based on all three components—threat, vulnerability, and consequence. And this risk must be managed better.

Now some people argue that because the rail system in our country is open and dynamic and therefore impossible to secure like other parts of the transportation system, that we should not spend a lot of money trying—that it becomes a “slippery slope.” To the contrary, to do nothing in the face of such demonstrated high risk is irresponsible.

Rail and transit authorities have made efforts to improve security. However, authorities are having a difficult time identifying resources that can be used for capital improvements. In fact, between 2001 and 2003 over \$1.7 billion was spent on security efforts for rail and transit by state and local authorities, but 75 percent was used just for overtime and other labor-intensive security operating expenses. While these measures are a key part of securing open facilities like rail stations, their costs leave very little money for the much needed capital investments in security.

The American Public Transportation Association estimated that it cost State and local transportation authorities nearly \$1 million a day during the 36 days of high alert status after the July 2005 London bombings—and this number does not even include the costs incurred in the additional efforts of New York and New Jersey's random searches.

No matter what we may have planned, the fact is that we will end up devoting tremendous resources should there be a rail attack. I would rather see us be strategic in our investments than be reactive every time a new threat is evident. Targeted investments in capital security enhancements at our most critical, high-risk locations will serve us during normal and heightened alerts and can possibly reduce our operating costs by leveraging the capability of people on the scene.

The Federal Government does not have to do this alone. We constantly hear about the importance of public-private partnerships, yet we have few positive examples to point at. The rail system has the opportunity to leverage the investments of private developers who seek to benefit from transit-oriented development. As we address capital security investments in passenger rail facilities, Congress should acknowledge and even encourage these public-private partnerships by providing a way for private developers to be guaranteed that the Federal Government's commitment to long-term projects is real. The current homeland security annual grant cycle is a road block for these larger projects, and it is critical to our Nation's security and fiscal well-being that we take advantage of such investment opportunities as they arise.

From 9/11 through 2005 we have spent approximately \$20 billion on aviation security, but only \$500 million on rail and transit security. We can and must do better than this. I call on my colleagues to join me in this Congress to address the critical issue of capital investments in our rail passenger security.

After Madrid and London, we can have no more excuses.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. CHARLIE NORWOOD

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

Mr. NORWOOD. Madam Speaker, on roll-call vote No. 15; On passage (H.R. 1). Had I been present, I would have voted "no."

RECOGNIZING WILLIAM DUNKER
FOR ACHIEVING THE RANK OF
EAGLE SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize William Dunker, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 495, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

William has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years William has been involved with Scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending William Dunker for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout. I am honored to represent William in the United States House of Representatives.

HONORING THE BRAVERY AND
SACRIFICE OF NATHANIEL
AGUIRRE

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, it has been said that a hero is someone who understands the degree of responsibility that comes with their freedom. Nathaniel Aguirre, 21 years old, certainly understood that degree of responsibility.

At just 17, Nathaniel enlisted in the United States Army Reserve and attended basic combat training at Fort Knox, Kentucky. After graduating from Creekview High School, he completed additional military training and was deployed to Iraq in December 2005.

On the morning of October 22, 2006, Nathaniel was on combat patrol in a village in western Baghdad. After his detachment encountered enemy fire, they confronted the enemy head on in a fight that would tragically cost Nathaniel his life. On that morning, a hero was not born—a hero was revealed.

Nathaniel leaves behind his parents and treasured younger sister Melissa, who had known her brother as a hero long before it was revealed to the rest of us.

Among the many honors bestowed in memory of his heroic acts, Nathaniel was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star Medal, the

Purple Heart, and the Army Good Conduct Medal. While these honors will never bring him back, they serve as markers in our Nation's history, identifying Nathaniel Aguirre as an American who understood his degree of responsibility to our Nation and his fellow Americans.

INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 366 TO
DESIGNATE THE DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OUT-
PATIENT CLINIC IN TULSA,
OKLAHOMA, AS THE ERNEST
CHILDERS DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS OUT-
PATIENT CLINIC

HON. JOHN SULLIVAN

OF OKLAHOMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

Mr. SULLIVAN. Madam Speaker, this evening, I introduced H.R. 366, legislation to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs, VA, Outpatient Clinic in Tulsa, Oklahoma as the Ernest Childers VA Outpatient Clinic to honor one of our Nation's finest military heroes.

Ernest Childers holds the distinction of being the first Native American to receive the Congressional Medal of Honor for his heroic action in 1943 at the battle of Oliveto, Italy, when he charged German machine gun nests against machine gun fire. Although suffering a broken foot in the assault, Childers ordered covering fire and advanced up a hill, single-handedly killing two snipers, silencing two machine gun nests and capturing an enemy mortar observer. His courageous action helped American troops win the battle and save the lives of American soldiers. Childers was also awarded the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star for his actions.

Born in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, Childers enlisted in the Oklahoma National Guard in 1937 to earn extra money while attending the Chilocco Indian School in north-central Oklahoma. While stationed at Fort Sill in Oklahoma, he was deployed to Africa to fight in World War II. Childers retired from the Army in 1965 as a lieutenant colonel but remained very active in the Tulsa community serving Indian youth, which led to the naming of a middle school in Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, in his honor in 1985.

As a proud Creek Indian, in 1966, Childers was honored by the Tulsa Chapter of the Council of American Indians as "Oklahoma's most outstanding Indian." Of his military service in World War II, Childers once said, "The American Indian has only one country to defend, and when you're picked on, the American Indian never turns his back." A fitting quote from a man who exemplified courage under fire and dedication to defending our Nation.

Until his death on March 17, 2005, Childers was Oklahoma's last Congressional Medal of Honor recipient still living in the State. I am proud to introduce this legislation to honor his life and legacy. We were honored to have him grace us with his model character, defend us with his bravery, and leave us all with a life well-lived.

TRIBUTE TO REVEREND ROBERT
W. RAWLS

HON. DALE E. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

Mr. KILDEE. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Reverend Robert W. Rawls who is honored by the clergy and congregation of Vernon Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church on Sunday, January 14 in my hometown of Flint, MI.

Reverend Rawls began his life of Christian service at Vernon Chapel. His parents, Johnny and Corrie Rawls were two of Vernon Chapel's founding members. They instilled in their son love for Our Lord and a desire to serve him. Reverend Rawls began his life of service as a Sunday School teacher, a member of the choir and a member of the Steward Board. He also served as the Superintendent of the Sunday School.

In 1976 he answered God's call to the ministry. Two years later he organized a Mission located at North and Gillespie Streets. He went street by street for 40 blocks talking to people and inviting them to come and worship. The first service was held on June 19, 1978. One person joined his congregation and his wife, Estelle, provided the music.

Continuing to spread the good news of Jesus Christ, the Mission grew and the congregation was able to purchase the building. The Presiding Elder, Martin L. Sims, authorized Reverend Reuben Russell to organize the Mission into a Church in 1980 and Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church was admitted into the Annual Conference. Reverend Rawls drew on his faith in God to continue working to bring people to Jesus Christ. Year after year, he held nightly street services from July through September. He worked to improve the Church and in 1996 completed the conversion of the former storefront to a Church edifice. For 22 years he served faithfully as a minister and pastor, retiring in 2002.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me and applaud the life and work of Reverend Robert W. Rawls as his family and friends at Vernon Chapel embrace him. He has devoted his life to doing God's work and the Flint community is a better place because of his compassion, commitment, and actions. I wish him the best as he enjoys his retirement.

RECOGNIZING MICHAEL DUNN FOR
ACHIEVING THE RANK OF EAGLE
SCOUT

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 10, 2007

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Michael Dunn, a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 45, and in earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Michael has been very active with his troop, participating in many Scout activities. Over the many years Michael has been involved with